



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

DON PRIDEMORE

**DESIGNATING OF WISCONSIN AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM IN HARTFORD
THE OFFICIAL STATE AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM
ASSEMBLY BILL 283
ASSEMBLY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

January 31, 2012

I would like to thank Chairman Petrowski and members of the Assembly Committee on Transportation for holding a hearing on Assembly Bill 283 today. This bill would designate the Wisconsin Automotive Museum in the city of Hartford, the official state automotive museum.

Currently, there is no official state automotive museum. The Wisconsin Automotive Museum is Wisconsin's largest auto museum and the only one that is a private non-profit corporation. The museum has been open to the general public year round for almost 25 years. It occupies over 75,000 square feet and the museum has an expanding collection of classic, vintage autos and automotive artifacts featuring Wisconsin automotive history. One such vintage auto is "The Kissel" which was manufactured in Hartford from 1906 to 1931. This famous Kissel model was a speedster commonly known as the "Gold Bug" and owned by such celebrities as Fatty Arbuckle and Amelia Earhardt.

Another priceless piece of history is a 1913 steam locomotive preserved and operated by the museum. This locomotive is reminding all and educating new generations about the history and power of railroading. This train is stored for viewing in the Hartford, Wisconsin Automotive Museum, but travels the state throughout the year entertaining and educating the citizens of our state about locomotive history.

Other attractions include:

- An exhibition dedicated to the American Motors Nash, which was 1st built in Kenosha in 1916. The Nash display is the only official collection of Nash cars as designated by the Nash Car Club of America
- An all-new display area for the Hudson Essex Terraplane
- Over 90 other rare vehicles, such as Reos, Pierce-Arrows, Pontiacs, Studebakers, Chevrolets and Fords, set off in a striking Art Deco interior
- Other automotive artifacts such as license plates, spark plugs, oil cans and signs
- Industrial and outboard engines built in Hartford from 1936—1992
- An automotive museum gift shop
- The Southeastern Wisconsin Short Track Hall of Fame
- An elaborate Lionel Train layout
- The home of the Kissel Kar Klub International

There are other car museums in Wisconsin but none as large, beautiful, or full of Wisconsin automotive history as the Wisconsin Automotive Museum in Hartford, Wisconsin. By designating the Wisconsin Automotive Museum of Hartford the official state auto museum we will increase foot traffic at the museum, increase state tourism revenue and expand automotive knowledge in our future generations with the outstanding automotive collection at the Hartford Wisconsin Automotive Museum.

Thank you again for hearing this bill today,

State representative Don Pridemore

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